

Introducing Leeds training programme Reflection: PAC -UK one year on



PAC-UK Advice Line handled 2,858 enquiries

PAC-UK awarded DfE grant 3,330 website hits per month (37% increase)



PAC-UK Services Review 2014-15

PAC-UK grows social media presence

What's in a name? For adopted children it's everything 1,638 participants on PAC-UK training courses (34% increase) Launch of Education Advice Line

Introducing: First Family Service



PAC-UK grant and fundraising review

PAC-UK receives outstanding Ofsted report

3,948 appointments attended by 1,272 unique service users





PAC-UK financial review

annual review 2014/2015



Message from CEO

This year we reflect on what has been a period of transformation for our organisation as we celebrate the first anniversary of our merger with AAY and develop services in the North.

We have accomplished a great deal over the last twelve months, achieving an outstanding Ofsted report which commended our innovation and collaborative approach to transforming adoption support services for families.

It has also been a year that has seen a significant change in how adoption support services have been accessed by families through the introduction of the Adoption Support Fund. The changes at PAC-UK are a reflection of what is happening in the sector as it evolves. We expect the coming year will bring yet more change as a result of the Government's regionalisation of adoption services, which will result in a reduced number of localised agencies with the voluntary sector expected to play a more central role.

In 2014-15 we have expanded our Education Service, now working with 15 LAs in the North of England and delivered a comprehensive training programme in Leeds. Our workshops have been well attended, with over 1638 parents, carers and professionals in Leeds and London benefitting from courses that are tailored to suit their needs.

As 2015-16 starts we have relaunched our Birth Parent Service renamed as First Family and established a therapeutic Child and Family Service that will provide services within family's homes or local centres.

This year's review features a reflection piece following the merger, service updates, a review of government initiatives and an interview with Alexander James Edwards, a supporter of PAC-UK and international tenor who has shared his experience reverting back to his birth-given name. We also provide an update on the fundraising initiatives which took place in 2014-15.

I want to thank personally all trustees, staff and volunteers who have contributed to PAC-UK's success this year and I look forward to seeing what the future brings!

Peter Sandiford

Chief Executive, PAC-UK



Message from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

This review covers the period from April 2014 to March 2015 which was a year that saw major changes both within our organisation and across the adoption and permanence landscape.

It has been a very challenging time, with the merger between the two adoption support agencies, PAC and After Adoption Yorkshire, who came together to form PAC-UK on 1st October 2014. We kicked off with a joint staff and trustee conference, where we agreed our vision for a society where children, young people and adults affected by adoption and permanence arrangements can live their lives to the full.

The new Board of Trustees, comprising trustees from the two merging agencies, set the key strategic aims for PAC-UK as:

- To realise the benefits of the merger through the creation of a sustainable and effective organisation.
- To expand the new organisation's influence and impact by adapting and developing it to meet current and future needs of increasing numbers of beneficiaries.

The Board also agreed that integration of services and sharing good practice be prioritised so that all service users and beneficiaries are able to access high quality services that meet their needs.

Work on consolidation took place during the winter period as well as handling contracts up for retender and investigating and responding to the new opportunities and services. In amongst all this, an Ofsted Inspection took place in January 2015 and rated PAC-UK as outstanding. The inspection recognised the value of the knowledge, commitment and experience of the staff in achieving exceptionally positive outcomes for service users.

A great deal has been achieved over the period of this review and there is undoubtedly still a long way to go. However, none of this could be achieved without the drive and passion of the CEO and leadership team and the dedication and professionalism of the staff and volunteers to deliver the best possible services for all service users and beneficiaries. I would also like to acknowledge the resolve and support of the Board of Trustees throughout the year.

The coming year promises to be just as challenging but I am heartened by the ongoing commitment and determination of all involved in PAC-UK to continue to rise to these challenges. We are looking forward to the exciting times to come.

Paula Newson-Smith Chair, Board of Trustees

Reflection: PAC-UK One Year On

This Annual Review, which covers the period of April 2014 to March 2015, is the first under the new PAC-UK identity following the amicable merger of PAC and After Adoption Yorkshire (AAY) in October 2014.

PAC-UK is now the largest independent adoption support agency in the UK, providing services from Northumberland in the north to West Sussex in the south. To date there are more than 100 local authorities benefiting from its services.

With offices in London and Leeds, the agency brings together a multi-disciplinary team of more than 70 members of staff and volunteers with skills and expertise in working therapeutically with children, adoptive families, other permanent carers, adopted adults and birth parents.

It has been a period of transformation for the agency as we expand our services and create new opportunities following government endorsements and funding for more comprehensive post adoption support.

PAC-UK Receives Outstanding Ofsted Report

In January 2015, PAC-UK received a powerful endorsement of its work with an outstanding 'overall effectiveness' rating from Ofsted.



Notable highlights from the report include:

- "Service users, particularly children and families, experience exceptionally positive outcomes, over and above what could be expected, given their complex circumstances"
- "Exceptionally knowledgeable, committed and experienced staff led by a strong and effective leadership team"
- "The training programme is highly regarded, as is the advice line, outreach service and therapeutic support for families"
- "Technology is used in a creative way to meet the needs of service users who may not be able to access the service otherwise"
- "Services are promptly delivered and where this has not been possible due to funding or commissioning, the agency has adopted a proactive approach to bring about change"
- "The agency provides a safe service for all who are involved with or use its services"
- "The agency is led and managed by people with a passion to deliver the best service possible through continual reflection, evaluation and improvement"
- "The agency has excellent and effective relationships with the local authorities who commission its services"
- "Commissioners comment on PAC-UK's flexibility, responsiveness, transparency and 'can do' attitude"

Introducing Leeds Training Programme

Prior to the merger, there was no strong training programme running in Leeds for a variety of reasons including budgeting constraints. With newfound funding and our Head of Training Service, Maggie Rogers leading the charge for training in the north and south, plans were put in place to set up a training provision in Leeds.

Kate McCormack, Training Coordinator (North) said:

"PAC-UK has a popular training programme running in London which is well received and attended by professionals, adoptive parents and adopted adults. We wanted to emulate this success in the north and following consultations with advisors, parents and commissioners, we built a calendar of workshops and seminars designed to help anyone involved in the adoption process."

The first PAC-UK training session in Leeds was with renowned trainer and adoption counsellor Holly Van Gulden on Living with an Angry Child; the course sold out in a matter of days.

Kate added:

"Following the success of early sessions we talked to team managers in local authorities, adoptive parents, social workers and adopted adults and created a programme that suited everyone's needs."

"We understand that this type of training and support was missing in the north prior to PAC-UK. The response has been overwhelming and we have had attendees travelling from as far as Edinburgh because they can't access this anywhere else. Our courses are innovative and new and we're delivering something that people are asking for."

cont...

Reflection: PAC-UK One Year On

cont...

Highlights from 2014/15 include:

- A four-day Theraplay ${\rm @ \ workshop \ for \ professionals \ in \ Leeds}$ with specialists from the US
- Sessions on Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) with Peter Jakob and his team at Partnership Projects; the first to be hosted by any organisation in the north
- Course on Parenting with PACE led by Kim Goulding
- Session for adopters and fosterers on the transition from primary to secondary school

Launch of Education Advice Line

The Education Advice Line was officially opened in October 2014. It is led by an Educational Psychologist and is designed to give parents, guardians, carers, school staff and any other education and care professionals access to one of PAC-UK's Education Advisers. They are on hand to provide guidance on issues relating to the educational needs of adopted and permanently placed children and young people.

Introducing First Family national birth parent and relative service

With an established reputation for adult services, including birth parent support in the north, PAC-UK is helping families who lose children through the courts.

The First Family Service, a name chosen by birth parents, has been created to help birth parents and relatives dealing with the consequences adoption.

Peter Sandiford, CEO of PAC-UK said: "PAC-UK helps thousands of people every year including birth parents and other relatives who are dealing with the consequences of adoption. We've had positive feedback from First Family service users who have been able to come to terms with the loss of a child through adoption or permanent placement and understand their situation better."

The service offers face-to-face and telephone counselling in addition to an intermediary service and drop-in groups for birth mothers.









PAC-UK Services Review 2014-15

Education Service

Since securing funding from the Big Lottery Fund in 2013, the Education Service has grown considerably and is now a core PAC-UK provision, with a dedicated Education Advice Line now operating on a weekly basis. In 2014/15, the service provided training to 37 schools and directly reached 767 educational staff.

The purpose of the service is to increase understanding and provide teachers and staff with practical strategies to cope with the difficult behaviour that children can exhibit

In 2014/15, the West London Adoption and Permanence Consortium (WLAPC) commissioned PAC-UK to deliver an education project following a similar scheme with the North London Consortium which ended in August 2014. The project focused on developing the capacities of families, schools and local authorities to better meet the educational needs of adopted and other permanently placed children and young people.

Feedback from the project has been positive with 97% of contributors rating the quality of training as 4 or 5 out of 5. By the end of the session,

participants found their understanding of attachment difficulties, trauma and its impact in school has improved. They also reported that their commitment to supporting and including adopted and permanently placed children has increased.

Child and Family Therapeutic Services

Our London Child and Family Service, managed by Franca Brenninkmeyer (who joined the charity in 1996 when it was then known as 'The Post-Adoption Centre') is one of PAC-UK's longestrunning and highly esteemed services.

In 2014/15 the London Child and Family team delivered a record number of face-to-face sessions working directly with 84 families. The number of sessions that have been provided by our London team has been increasing year on year for the last four years. This trend in expected to continue in 2015-16.

The service offers one-off consultations, comprehensive assessments and intensive therapeutic services to parents and families with adopted or permanently placed children and adolescents. It was set up to provide specialist support for adoptive (and permanent placement) families

considering that many adopted children have suffered abuse, neglect, attachment breaks and other losses and traumas prior to their adoption.

The emotional needs of children with these developmental traumas are often considerable and their presentation can be excessively complex and challenging (they do have some remarkable strengths too though!)

The highly experienced and qualified Child and Family team is passionate about their therapeutic work with families which aims to address the effects of the children's traumatic early life experiences, and supports parents in becoming 'therapeutic parents', so that family life becomes more fulfilling for all

We look forward to providing a more extensive review next year with detailed updates from our London Child and Family service and the newly formed Leeds Child and Family Service.

The developments in both services following the availability of the new 'Adoption Support Fund' for adoptive families (since May 2015) will be particularly highlighted.





PAC-UK Services Review 2014-15

Adult Services

Outreach Support Work

Face to face counselling and professional support services are provided to all persons affected by adoption and permanency and are conducted on PAC-UK's premises and through local outreach bases established in 33 local authorities in England.

In 2014-15 London outreach bases had 1,060 attended appointments with 363 unique individuals (an increase of over 30% compared to 2013-14 figures). Of the 1,060 attended appointments 365 were with adoptive parents, 298 with adult adoptees, 223 with birth parents and birth relatives, 105 with prospective adopters, 25 with Special Guardians and 44 with other individuals including professionals and social workers. Intermediary and Birth Family Work

PAC-UK's birth parent support workers have continued to provide services at HMPs Holloway, Askham Grange and New Hall, providing support to mothers whose children are in long-term foster care or adoptive placements.

Our London and Leeds offices both have a long tradition of providing innovative birth parent services, working closely with the courts to provide services for birth mothers who have had children placed into care. PAC-UK's national birth parent service has grown considerably since the merger and has now been rebranded as First Family, a name chosen following consultation with birth parents to reflect the place of the birth family in the adopted child's long-term identity

The Leeds office in particular has a long history working with birth parents and adult adoptees to reunite lost loved ones who have been separated through adoption or permanency. As an adoption support agency we are able to provide a point of communication to enable families to reconnect.

Enhancing Adoptive Parenting (EAP)

PAC-UK has been involved in the development of the Enhancing Adoptive Parenting Programme (EAP), a ten-week i evidence-based parenting programme for adopters facing challenging problems in children aged 3-9 recently placed from care. The programme is delivered to individual families so can be tailored closely to their needs.

Thanks to a generous Santander grant PAC-UK trialled the delivery of the EAP

programme via Skype and an adoptive mother blogged about her experiences of taking part in July 2014. Sezz was thrilled with the outcomes from the trial. She said:

"The positive changes are very noticeable, one big one being the relationship between Missy and Daddy which is fantastic. I am so glad it has been trialled over Skype because I am not sure we could have committed to 10 weeks if we had to travel somewhere. I am beyond grateful for PAC-UK choosing to work with us on this programme and I highly recommend it to any adopters."

Advice Line

PAC-UK's London and Leeds based advice lines handled 2,858 enquiries in 2014/15 helping residents and professionals from 145 local authorities across the UK and in some instances internationally.

The London advice line saw a 30% increase in calls during this time period compared to 2013/14. Both advice lines are managed by experienced and qualified counsellors who are open to callers for a total of 44 hours per week (London Advice Line 29 hours, Leeds Advice Line 15 hours).



Review of PAC-UK Training Programme 2014/15

The PAC-UK Training Service provides an invaluable platform for dissemination of best practice whilst promoting the agency as a leader in the adoption sector.

In 2014/15, PAC-UK ran a highly successful programme of 80 training days attended by a total of 1638 people, representing a 34% increase on last year. Of those who attended courses, 52% were professionals, 45% adopters/carers and 2% adopted people. 91% of those who completed evaluations rated the courses as excellent or very good.

PAC-UK is responding to local authority funding cuts to individual staff training budgets by developing and marketing commissioned group training for social work staff and adoptive parents. We delivered 30 trainings on commission in 2014/15 of which 12 were outside I ondon.

We also, for the first time, offered a series of 21 short trainings covering the full range of knowledge essential to adoption social work teams. These could be bought in bulk or individually and gave adoption professionals an excellent opportunity to gain continuing professional development in this field.

In 2014/15 PAC-UK developed a series of workshops and seminars in Leeds which have been well received.

Following a research report in 2014 which indicated a hidden and surprisingly not uncommon phenomenon of child-on-parent aggression in adoptive homes, PAC-UK quickly incorporated into its training programme courses for adoptive parents and for professionals in a recently-developed technique called Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) developed by Dr Peter Jakob. This assists struggling parents to reassert their 'parenting presence' and to deescalate potentially violent scenarios.

In 2016, PAC-UK will be working with Adoption UK to deliver a one day conference entitled Brain Based Parenting – From Mistrust to Trust. World renowned Clinical Psychologist Dr Dan Hughes and Jon Baylin have collaborated on developing a brain based approach to help children who have experienced neglect and trauma. More information can be found on the PAC-UK website.

PAC-UK Awarded DfE Grant for Regional Schools Project

In September 2014, PAC-UK was awarded a grant of £219,700 to provide a regional model for schools and social workers on the education of adopted children.

The funds come from the Department for Education's voluntary and community sector (VCS) grants and enable PAC-UK to work with the Yorkshire and Humber Adoption Consortium to develop a model of good practice to ensure that adopted children's educational needs are better met in school.

The project's objectives are to:

- Deliver training around adopted children's needs to the designated teachers of every school in the Yorkshire and Humber region
- Provide in-depth training and consultations to each of the focus schools

- Deliver continuing professional development on educational issues to adoption/adoption support professionals across the region
- Partner with virtual schools across the region to extend their expertise in supporting schools to meet adopted children's needs
- Identify Adoption Advocates within each focus school and facilitate an advocate network to share good practice and build capacity across the region
- Establish and facilitate educationfocused support groups for adoptive parents
- Develop and pilot a nationally accredited 'adoption aware school' scheme.

As a result of the funding, PAC-UK has

set up a dedicated Education Service with three full-time members of staff.



Department for Education

PAC-UK's Chief Executive Officer Peter Sandiford said:

"This significant grant enables PAC-UK to set in place a far-reaching project to improve the education experience of adopted children. A key element is the piloting of an 'adoption aware school' scheme for national roll out which will include training and educational materials for schools, social workers and adoptive parents.

"PAC-UK envisages this as a benchmark in raising awareness nationally of the challenges faced by adopted and permanently placed children."

What's in a Name? For Adopted Children, it's Everything

Alexander James Edwards (formerly known as James Alexander David Edwards) is a professional operatic tenor and PAC-UK supporter who was adopted at birth in 1974. He was raised by his adoptive parents alongside four other adopted and fostered siblings.

I recall a time when my name was Alex. It was given to me by my birth parents and up until the age of six it was all I knew. Then, in what felt an overnight decision, my first name was changed to James. At the time, my adoptive parents had separated and as a consequence it was as if my identity had been split in two; on one side, my adoptive father continued to call me Alex while on the other, my mother referred to me as James.

While I never paid much attention to my new moniker growing up, I believe it had a profound impact on my life. As a child it is easy to think that change is a result of something not being 'right.' When my parents changed my name, was it because I was bad? Had I done something wrong? All too often adopted children can feel like they aren't good enough and this can be made worse when fundamental aspects such as their name are changed.

Is it Legal? Changing an Adopted Child's Name

I have friends who are in the middle of adopting a child and I am really interested in seeing the whole process. According to the Deed Poll Office, if you want to change any of your adopted child's forenames, this is treated in the same way as a name change for any child — you will need a deed poll, and the consent of all parents named on the adoption certificate.



While it is not illegal to change an adopted child's name, psychologists advise against it unless it is absolutely necessary. Most experts say that children should not be re-named once they are old enough to recognise and respond to their name; this can be as young as one.

Dr Vera Fahlberg, the well-respected author of A Child's Journey Through Placement, cautions that "changes in the child's first name during [the toddler years] may carry an even higher risk than at other developmental stages due to the combination of the separation from the child's birth parents and the strong developmental task during this age for ego and identity development."

When I was reunited with my birth family over ten years ago, I finally understood how difficult it must have been to find me, given that they knew of my existence as Alex.

Since 1975, adopted people have had the right to apply for information that will enable them to obtain a copy of their original birth certificate. This created an influx of adoptive parents changing their child's name; obscuring their identity and reducing the chances of them reuniting with birth relatives later in life. While I was lucky enough to find my birth family, I fear there are many children who are unaware they

started life as a completely different person.

Why Changing my Name is the Final Piece of the Puzzle

A child's name, both forename and surname, is a fundamental part of their history and heritage; it was the only piece of my life that I took with me when my birth parents put me up for adoption.

After meeting my birth family and spending time as 'Alex', I became aware that it never felt natural using my adopted name; I found comfort in the fact they knew the real me. I made the decision to revert to my birth name at the age of 41 which ultimately brought me closure and a better understanding of who I am.

I am now part of a large family and I know my birth Mum and Dad. My birth father also went on to have two daughters who always knew of my existence and who I have a great relationship with. I have three children between the ages of 6 and 16 and they now have a massive extended family of cousins, uncles and aunties with four sets of grandparents. Christmas in our household will be a hive of activity and I cannot wait to celebrate it as Alex once again.



PAC-UK Grants and Fundraising 2014 - 15

In spite of the increasing competition for funding from charitable trusts and foundations, PAC-UK managed to grow this income stream by nearly £63,000 to £223,535 during 2014-15.



LOTTERY FUNDED

PAC-UK continues to benefit from a substantial grant from The Big Lottery to assist us in our work with adoptive families – calendar year 2014 was year 3 of a 5 year grant of £90,000 per annum towards core costs and development.

We had new grants from:

- The Dulverton Trust contributed towards expenses associated with the merger (legal costs, rebranding, joint staff conference and systems convergence)
- Beatrice Laing Trust and the Zurich Community Trust - gave financial support to PAC-UK's London-based birth parent support worker, for her general counselling work and also her work with birth mothers in HMP Holloway.
- Henry Smith Charity and the Tudor Trust – supported our major project working with women offenders and exoffenders in the north of England
- The Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust and the Mercers' Charitable Foundation both made a substantial contribution to our work with adoptive families
- The Rayne Foundation gave a generous contribution towards

the salary of PAC-UK's Education Psychologist, who became Head of Education Service when it launched in 2014

• The Santander Foundation - enabled us to deliver the Enhancing Adoptive Parenting programme to five adoptive families with newly-placed children.

Other donations towards our core activities were gratefully received from:

- The Fitzdale Trust
- The Percy Bilton Charity
- The Souter Charitable Trust
- The Charlotte Bonham Carter Charitable Trust
- The Marsh Christian Trust
- Peter Stebbings Memorial Charity

PAC-UK Fundraising Events

In March 2015 we held our second Fundraising Dinner and Auction at Mark Hix's Tramshed restaurant. Attended by 50 friends and supporters of PAC-UK, we raised £10k towards our work.



Auction lots included a personal caricature from PAC-UK patron and cartoonist Martin Rowson; a stay for 8 in a Cornish country home; a flying trapeze experience for 3 and dinner for 2 at Jason Atherton's renowned Pollen Street Social restaurant.

In August 2014, Harry Walton raised

£1,000 as sole rider on behalf of PAC-UK in the RideLondon-Surrey 100 cycle race, cruelly cut short by the extremes of Hurricane Bertha (the route had to be shortened due to flooding on the roads) The cyclists showed a palpable sense of relief at the finishing line!

In November 2014, an impressive 17 strong PAC-UK contingent once more braved the elements to take part in the annual Regent's Park 10K Challenge. Adoptive parent Christian led the PAC-UK pack, achieving 39th place among the 800 plus runners with a spectacular time of 40 minutes and 42 seconds. PAC-UK CEO Peter Sandiford came in a little under his personal best at just over a minute over the hour while his better half Julie Elston once more pipped him at the post at 59 minutes 19 seconds. The team of staff, supporters and service-users raised around £2,500.





Review of Government Initiatives and Endorsements

Adoption Support Fund Update 2014/15

In 2014, the government announced details of the Adoption Support Fund which became available to families earlier this year. The fund was established to help families in need of extra support access specialist therapeutic services such as cognitive therapy, play and music therapy and intensive family support.

In May 2015 the fund became nationally available for children up to the age of 18 (or 25 with an SEN statement) who have been adopted from local authority care in England or adopted from Wales but living in England.

The fund provides money for a range of therapeutic services and to fund further specialist clinical assessments such as Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

PAC-UK CEO Peter Sandiford has welcomed the national recognition for adoption support which removes the unnecessary postcode lottery of service provision.

He said: "We are working closely with organisations in the adoption sector to ensure access to services is straightforward and responsive to the needs of children and families."

The Adoption Support Fund is part of a wider package of reforms introduced through the Children and Families Act including a faster approval process which has resulted in a record high in adoptions over the last twelve months.



Adopted Schoolchildren Benefit from DfE Pupil Premium Plus

An extra 10,000 pupils across England are benefiting from a further £20 million in Pupil Premium money.

The funding is designed to help schoolchildren adopted from care get the support they need to thrive at school. Previously only children adopted from care since 2005 were eligible.

The Pupil Premium money will help schools provide tailored support to raise the attainment of all adopted children, including catch up sessions or specialist training for staff working with children adopted from care.





PAC-UK Grows Social Media Presence

During 2014/15 PAC-UK's web and social media presence has continued to strengthen. Hits on PAC-UK's website **increased by 37**% compared to 2013-14 figures. Based on the first and second quarter figures for 2015/16, we are on target to increase this by a further 40%.

PAC-UK now has established and highly interactive social media platforms. Regular, balanced content promoting all of PAC-UK services, training events and news is scheduled and published across our social media platforms.

PAC-UK Website Hits



*Projected figures based on actual Q1 and Q2 hits for 2015-16.

We now have 1,500+ followers on Twitter and have been able to interact with individuals and organisations to build relationships to further promote PAC-UK services and enhance our national profile.





Financial Review 2014 - 15

Our government and local authority income is up to £641,662 (from £399,027 in 2013/14) while fees have increased to £498,997 (from £343,115).

Income from grants and foundations increased by 39% to £223,535 and we received £23,815 in donations and gifts and £13,795 from events.

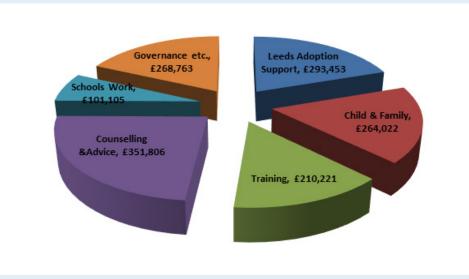
Our income was spent across our core services in a similar pattern to previous years. However, there was a rapid growth in expenditure (most from specially-funded projects) in the Education Service, at £101,105 compared to £40,255 last year.

Note: Expenditure on our adoption support services in Leeds has been shown as a separate category in the expenditure chart (£293,453)





Expenditure 2014 - 15





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Mr Peter Sandiford

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A big thank you to our many donors during 2014/15 and to the following charitable trusts which have supported us during the year:

- The Big Lottery Fund
- The Dulverton Trust
- Beatrice Laing Trust
- The Zurich Community Trust
- Henry Smith Charity
- Tudor Trust
- The Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust
- The Mercers' Charitable Foundation
- The Rayne Foundation
- The Santander Foundation
- The Fitzdale Trust
- The Percy Bilton Charity
- The Souter Charitable Trust
- The Charlotte Bonham Carter Charitable Trust
- The Marsh Christian Trust
- Peter Stebbings Memorial Charity

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